

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 IOE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-05

/077 W

-----063535 121840Z /44

O 121745Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8780

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 4715

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: MEETING WITH FONMIN BOTHA ON NEXT
ROUND OF TALKS

REF: (A) USUN 2962; (B) STATE 217562

FOLLOWING IS JOINT REPORT OF FIVE AMBASSADORS COVERING THE
MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA THIS AFTERNOON:

BEGIN TEXT:

1. THE FIVE MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA AND SECRETARY
FOURIE ON AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 12 FOR 40 MINUTES. THE
AMERICAN AMBASSADOR PRESENTED THE MESSAGE CONTAINING THE
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INVITATION FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS. CONTENDING THAT
THEY HAD NEVER AGREED TO A PHASED WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES,
BOTHA AND FOURIE TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO THE LANGUAGE
"THE NEED TO REACH AGREEMENT ON THE FRAMEWORK OF A SETTLE-
MENT, INCLUDING, IN PARTICULAR, AGREEMENT ON A PHASED WITH-
DRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES". THEY ARGUED THATTHE "FRAME-
WORK FOR A SETTLEMENT" IMPLIED WE ARE PROPOSING A NEW FRAME-

WORK INVOLVING FURTHER SIGNIFICANT SOUTH AFRICAN CONCESSIONS. THIS THEY SAID WAS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. BOTHA NOTED THE FLUED SITUATION IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA AND THAT ONCE THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES WERE OUT OF NAMIBIA, THERE WOULD BE NO MEANS OF RESTORING THE SITUATION IF THINGS GOT OUT OF HAND. WE HAD TO ARGUE AT LENGTH THAT THERE WAS NO "AGREEMENT" YET ON A FRAMEWORK AND THAT THIS IS WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND SWAPO. A KEY ELEMENT IN REACHING THIS AGREEMENT IS TO HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES.

2. FOLLOWING THIS EXCHANGE BOTHA ADOPTED A MORE REASONABLE ATTITUDE. HE INDICATED THAT IF DISCUSSION COULD BEGIN BETWEEN THE UN REPRESENTATIVE AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON THE QUESTION OF WITHDRAWAL--AS THE BRITISH AND AMERICANS WERE PROPOSING IN THE CASE OF RHODESIA--THEN PERHAPS AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED ON THIS PROBLEM. HE ALSO BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WITHDRAWAL APPLIED ONLY TO SOUTH AFRICA OR ALSO TO SWAPO FORCES. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE WITHDRAWAL PLAN WILL HAVE TO INVOLVE INITIALLY A CEASE-FIRE APPLICABLE TO BOTH SIDES AND WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES TO THEIR RESPECTIVE BASES. FOURIE SAID THAT IF THAT IS WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT, THE LANGUAGE OF OUR MESSAGE WOULD BE MUCH IMPROVED WERE IT TO REFLECT THAT THE WITHDRAWAL PLAN APPLIES TO SOUTH AFRICA "AND OTHER" FORCES. IN THIS CONNECTION BOTHA SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF UN OFFICIALS COULD HAVE AN

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EARLY LOOK AT THE SITUATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER IN PREPARATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A WITHDRAWAL PLAN. THE SOUTH AFRICANS INDICATED THAT THEY HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT NETO WOULD WELCOME IT. CERTAINLY THERE WOULD BE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT COOPERATION. WE INDICATED THAT WE WOULD PASS THIS IDEA TO THE CONTACT GROUP IN NEW YORK FOR CONSIDERATION SINCE WE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS ON THE SUBJECT.

3. UNRELATED TO THE WITHDRAWAL DISCUSSION, BOTHA VOLUNTEERED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD INTENDED TO CALL US IN LATER THIS WEEK TO INFORM US THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO LIVE, THOUGH RELUCTANTLY, WITH THE DESIGNATION OF AHTISAARI AS THE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE. WE NOTED THAT THIS WAS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD AND WOULD BE HELPFUL.

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4. WITH REGARD TO DATES AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS--BOTH SAID THAT BECAUSE OF PRIOR COMMITMENTS, SEPTEMBER 19-21 WOULD BE OUT OF THE QUESTION. HE INDICATED THAT SEPT-EMBER 22-23 WOULD BE SATISFACTORY OR ALTERNATIVELY SEPTEMBER 16-17. BOTH DATES ASSUME MEETINGS WOULD TAKE PLACE IN PRETORIA.

5. IN DISCUSSING THE SITE BOTH EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD BE INDISPENSABLE. AT ONE POINT HE ASKED IF THE TALKS WERE HELD IN NEW YORK WHETHER THE ENTRY OF THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE UNITED STATES COULD BE ASSURED. WE INDICATED THAT THE INVITATION WAS DIRECTED TO HIM AS FOREIGN MINISTER AS THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF THESE TALKS. HE DID NOT PRESS THIS POINT BUT LEFT IT THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO CONSULT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON DATE AND VENUE AND WOULD
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LET US KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

6. FOURIE SUBSEQUENTLY CALLED TO SAY THAT THE DATES PROPOSED IN PARA 4 ABOVE WOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO THE PRIME MINISTER ASSUMING PRETORIA IS THE VENUE.

7. IN DELIVERING THE MESSAGE WE MADE THE TWO ORAL POINTS CONTAINED IN OUR INSTRUCTIONS. WITH RESPECT TO THE COUNCIL OF NAMIBIA'S ACTION ON WALVIS BAY, BOTHA EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS CLARIFICATION OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE FIVE.

RECOMMENDATION:

8. BOTHA'S SUGGESTION THAT THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL SEND PERSONS WHO MIGHT EXAMINE THE BORDER AREA ON BOTH SIDES PREPARATORY TO DEVISING CEASE-FIRE AND WITHDRAWAL ARRANGEMENTS IS A MATTER WORTH EXPLORING. PERHAPS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SECRETARIAT INVOLVED IN CONTINGENCY PLANNING MIGHT BE SENT FOR THIS PURPOSE. SUCH AN IDEA WOULD HAVE TO BE CONCERTED WITH SWAPO, OF COURSE. IF SWAPO RAISED NO OBJECTIONS, THE IDEA WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF:

--OBTAINING EARLY UN INVOLVEMENT;

--DEMONSTRATING EVEN-HANDEDNESS TO SOUTH AFRICANS WHO DOUBT THE IMPARTIALITY OF OUR EFFORTS;

--ASSISTING IN THE PLANNING OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN AND SWAPO FORCES. END TEXT.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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